

**BLACK
WOMEN
ORGANIZED
FOR ACTION**

MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. BOX 15072
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94115

October 9, 1974

Mr. Norman Lear
c/o Tandem Productions
7800 Beverly Blvd.
Los Angeles, Ca. 90036

Dear Mr. Lear:

This season's television entries, supplemented by last season's carryovers, have significantly increased the quantity of shows which portray racial and ethnic minorities and women in a variety of situations and roles. We are aware that your company has pioneered in these efforts and we applaud this long overdue commitment of the TV industry to recognizing the multiracial, multicultural makeup of our society and the multiple roles of women. We, as Black women, are particularly interested in the portrayal of Black women in these shows and have encouraged our members to watch them --- with a critical eye.

Our organization has established a monitoring project which will focus in on those shows which have Black women involved---either in front of the cameras or behind the cameras as writers, producers, directors. We have been looking at "Good Times" for example and have had several discussions about the positive and negative concepts which have emerged in programs already aired. We believe that it is essential that Black Women Organized for Action meet with your organization to express our concerns and to give our input on past and projected segments of this show.

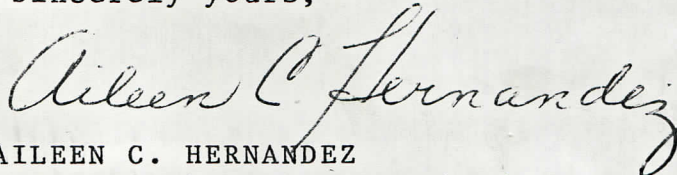
In a recent meeting with Jane Calvin Lewis of the National Black Feminist Organization, I was surprised to learn that she had been told that the Good Times show which dealt with Florida's introduction to feminism had been "cleared" with my organization. As I am sure you know, I have never been contacted by Norman Lear productions and have had no conversations with anyone in your organization about the show. I assume that the reference was to NOW, and I am glad to know that contacts are being made with NOW about the portrayal of women in your shows. However, it is equally important that Black women's groups are involved, because so few Black women have actually joined NOW or any other nationally identified feminist groups. Clearly there are many Black women who are feminist, but for a variety of reasons they have not felt comfortable about identifying with NOW---projected frequently as white and middle class, and by implication, potentially, if not actually racist.

Black Women Organized for Action is a group which can be of

great assistance to your company and to television in general. As I indicated at the beginning of this letter, we are already involved in critical viewing and expect to be more involved. We definitely want input. We have been appalled by some of the ancient stereotypes about Black women which have been resurrected to provide fodder for some of the new shows. We object to them and we intend to be vocal in our objections. We do not, however, wish to attack without giving those who control these shows an opportunity to hear our concerns and respond. We are pleased that the obvious talents of some Black women are being given a showcase, but we want the content of those shows to reflect the many faces of Black women.

We look forward to a prompt response to our letter and to the setting of a convenient date for members of our media committee to meet with you and pertinent members of your staff.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aileen C. Hernandez". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

AILEEN C. HERNANDEZ
for Black Women Organized
for Action

cc: Virginia Carter
Jane Galvin Lewis